

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A system for establishing a subscription to a periodical, comprising:
a request receiving component configured to receive a request to purchase a single
periodical;
5 an offering component configured to offer to sell a subscription to the periodical at a
subscription rate;
an acceptance receiving component configured to receive an acceptance to the offer
to sell the subscription; and
a component configured to record the distribution of the single periodical as a first
10 issue of the subscription.

2. The system of claim 1, further comprising an information receiving component
configured to receive information indicating that a subscription is available for the single periodical
for which the request to purchase was received.

3. The system of claim 1, further comprising a payment receiving component
15 configured to receive payment for the sale of the subscription.

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configured to calculate an amount due to the wholesaler for the sale of the single issue.

15. The system of claim 13, further comprising a retail subscription system calculating component configured to calculate an amount due to the retail subscription system for sale of the subscription.

5 16. The system of claim 14, further comprising a transmitting component configured to transmit the calculated amount to the retail subscription system.

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17. A method of establishing a subscription to a periodical at a point-of-sale terminal, comprising the steps of:

receiving at a point-of-sale terminal a single issue of a periodical;

5 receiving at the point-of-sale terminal a subscription card requesting a subscription to the periodical, the subscription card containing a first set of subscription information;

inputting into the point-of-sale terminal a second set of subscription information, the second set including subscription price and term;

receiving payment for the subscription;

generating a receipt containing the subscription price and term; and

10 providing the single issue as the first issue of the subscription.

18. The method according to claim 17, further comprising generating an authentication code.

19. The method according to claim 18, wherein the step of generating a receipt includes imprinting the authentication code on the receipt.

15 20. The method according to claim 18, further comprising imprinting the authentication code on the subscription card.

21. The method according to claim 17, further comprising scanning at the point-of-sale terminal a bar code provided on the single issue to obtain periodical information.

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22. The method according to claim 17, further comprising
sending the subscription card to a retail subscription system for subscription
processing.

23. The method according to claim 17, further comprising
calculating an amount due to the wholesaler for the sale of the single issue.

24. The method according to claim 22, further comprising
calculating an amount due to the retail subscription system for sale of the
subscription.

25. The method according to claim 24, further comprising
transmitting the calculated amount to the retail subscription system.

26. A system for establishing a subscription to a periodical at a point-of-sale terminal, comprising:

a periodical receiving component configured to receive at the point-of-sale terminal a single issue of a periodical, the single issue containing a bar code symbol;

5 a scanning component configured to scan at the point-of-sale terminal the bar code
symbol to retrieve periodical information;

a transmitting component configured to transmit the periodical information to a controller;

an indication receiving component configured to receive an indication that a
10 subscription to the periodical is available for sale;

a card receiving component configured to receive a subscription card requesting a subscription to the periodical, the subscription card containing a first set of subscription information;

an inputting component configured to input into the point-of-sale terminal a second
15 set of subscription information, the second set including subscription price and term;

a payment receiving component configured to receive payment for the purchase of the subscription;

a receipt generating component configured to generate a receipt; and

a providing component configured to provide the single issue as the first issue of
20 the subscription.

27. The system of claim 26, further comprising a code generating component configured to generate an authentication code.

28. The system of claim 27, wherein the receipt generating component includes a code-on-receipt imprinting component configured to imprint the authentication code on the receipt.

25 29. The system of claim 26, wherein the receipt generating component includes a price-
and-term imprinting component configured to imprint the subscription price and subscription term

on the receipt.

30. The system of claim 27, further comprising a code-on-card imprinting component configured to imprint the authentication code on the subscription card.

5 31. The system of claim 26, further comprising a sending component configured to send the subscription card to a retail subscription system for subscription processing.

32. The system of claim 26, further comprising a wholesale calculating component configured to calculate an amount due to the wholesaler for the sale of the single issue.

10 33. The system of claim 26, further comprising a retail subscription system calculating component configured to calculate an amount due to the retail subscription system for sale of the subscription.

34. The system of claim 33, further comprising a transmitting component configured to transmit the calculated amount to the retail subscription system.

35. A method of establishing a subscription to a periodical at a point-of-sale terminal, comprising the steps of:

receiving at the point-of-sale terminal a single issue of a periodical, the single issue containing a bar code symbol;

5 scanning at the point-of-sale terminal the bar code symbol to retrieve periodical information;

transmitting the periodical information to a controller;

receiving an indication that a subscription to the periodical is available for sale;

10 receiving a subscription card requesting a subscription to the periodical, the subscription card containing a first set of subscription information;

inputting into the point-of-sale terminal a second set of subscription information, the second set including subscription price and term;

receiving payment for the purchase of the subscription;

generating a receipt; and

15 providing the single issue as the first issue of the subscription.

36. The method according to claim 35, further comprising generating an authentication code.

37. The method according to claim 36, wherein the step of generating a receipt includes imprinting the authentication code on the receipt.

20 38. The method according to claim 35, wherein the step of generating a receipt includes imprinting the subscription price and subscription term on the receipt.

39. The method according to claim 36, further comprising imprinting the authentication code on the subscription card.

40. The method according to claim 35, further comprising
5 sending the subscription card to a retail subscription system for subscription processing.

41. The method according to claim 35, further comprising
calculating an amount due to the wholesaler for the sale of the single issue.

42. The method according to claim 35, further comprising
calculating an amount due to the retail subscription system for sale of the
10 subscription.

43. The method according to claim 42, further comprising
transmitting the calculated amount to the retail subscription system.

44. A system for initiating a subscription to a periodical, comprising:

an offering component configured to offer to sell a subscription to a periodical at a point-of-sale terminal;

5 an information receiving component configured to receive customer information from a customer accepting the offer;

an associating component configured to associate an authentication code with the customer information; and

a transmitting component configured to transmit the customer information and the authentication code to an agent to initiate the subscription.

10 45. The system of claim 44, further comprising a providing component configured to provide a single periodical as the first issue of the subscription.

46. The system of claim 44, further comprising a payment receiving component configured to receive payment for sale of the subscription.

47. A method of initiating a subscription to a periodical, comprising the steps of:
offering to sell a subscription to a periodical at a point-of-sale terminal;
receiving customer information from a customer accepting the offer;
associating an authentication code with the customer information; and

5 transmitting the customer information and the authentication code to an agent to
initiate the subscription.

48. The method according to claim 47, further comprising
providing a single periodical as the first issue of the subscription.

49. The method according to claim 47, further comprising
10 receiving payment for sale of the subscription.

50. A system for initiating a subscription to a periodical from a retail subscription system, comprising:

a receiving component configured to receive a completed subscription card indicating that a subscription to a periodical was sold, the subscription card containing subscription information and an authentication code;

a comparing component configured to compare the authentication code contained on the subscription card with authentication codes stored in a database;

a determining component configured to determine that the authentication code contained on the subscription card is valid if the authentication code contained on the subscription card matches at least one of the authentication codes stored in the database; and

a transmitting component configured to transmit subscription information from the subscription card to a fulfillment house to initiate the subscription if the authentication code on the subscription card is determined valid.

51. The system of claim 50, further comprising a storing component configured to store the subscription information from the subscription card into a database.

52. The system of claim 50, wherein the subscription information contains data indicating whether the sale of the subscription included distribution of a single issue of the periodical.

53. A method of initiating a subscription to a periodical from a retail subscription system, comprising the steps of:

receiving a completed subscription card indicating that a subscription to a periodical was sold, the subscription card containing subscription information and an authentication code;

5 comparing the authentication code contained on the subscription card with authentication codes stored in a database;

determining that the authentication code contained on the subscription card is valid if the authentication code contained on the subscription card matches at least one of the authentication codes stored in the database; and

10 transmitting subscription information from the subscription card to a fulfillment house to initiate the subscription if the authentication code on the subscription card is determined valid.

54. The method according to claim 53, further comprising
storing the subscription information from the subscription card into a database.

15 55. The method according to claim 53, wherein the subscription information contains data indicating whether the sale of the subscription included distribution of a single issue of the periodical.

56. A system for initiating a subscription, comprising:

a receiving component configured to receive subscription information associated with a sale of a subscription to a periodical, the subscription information including a subscription term;

5 an issue determining component configured to determine a number of issues to be distributed during the subscription term;

a distribution determining component configured to determine whether the sale of the subscription included distribution of a single issue of the periodical; and

a distribution initiating component configured to initiate a subscription for the
10 determined number of issues minus one, if the sale of the subscription is determined to include
distribution of a single issue of the periodical.

57. The system of claim 56, further comprising a standard initiating component configured to initiate a subscription for the determined number of issues, if the sale of the subscription is determined not to include distribution of a single issue of the periodical.

58. A method of initiating a subscription, comprising the steps of:
 receiving subscription information associated with a sale of a subscription to a
 periodical, the subscription information including a subscription term;
 determining a number of issues to be distributed during the subscription term;
 5 determining whether the sale of the subscription included distribution of a single
 issue of the periodical; and
 initiating a subscription for the determined number of issues minus one, if the sale
 of the subscription is determined to include distribution of a single issue of the periodical.

59. The method according to claim 58, further comprising
 10 initiating a subscription for the determined number of issues, if the sale of the
 subscription is determined not to include distribution of a single issue of the periodical.

60. A system for processing a subscription payment, comprising:
a payment receiving component configured to receive a payment for a subscription
to a periodical at a point-of-sale terminal;
a cost determining component configured to determine a cost for a single issue of
5 the periodical;
a transmitting component configured to transmit a payment corresponding to the
cost to a periodical wholesaler;
a first determining component configured to determine a first amount to be retained
from a balance of the payment based on the determination of the single issue cost;
10 a first retaining component configured to retain the determined first amount ; and
a first transmitting component configured to transmit a remaining balance of the
payment to a retail subscription system.

61. The system of claim 60, further comprising a second determining component
configured to determine a second amount to be retained from the remaining balance of the payment;
15 a second retaining component configured to retain the determined second amount at the retail
subscription system; and a second transmitting component configured to transmit the remaining
balance of the payment to a fulfillment house.

62. The system of claim 60, wherein the payment for a subscription includes a payment
for the single issue of the periodical.

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63. A method of processing a subscription payment, comprising the steps of:
receiving a payment for a subscription to a periodical at a point-of-sale terminal;
determining a cost for a single issue of the periodical;
transmitting a payment corresponding to the cost to a periodical wholesaler;
5 determining a first amount to be retained from a balance of the payment based on
the determination of the single issue cost;
retaining the determined first amount ; and
transmitting a remaining balance of the payment to a retail subscription system.
64. The method according to claim 63, further comprising
10 determining a second amount to be retained from the remaining balance of the
payment;
retaining the determined second amount at the retail subscription system; and
transmitting the remaining balance of the payment to a fulfillment house.
65. The method according to claim 63, wherein the payment for a subscription includes
15 a payment for the single issue of the periodical.

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67. A computer program product comprising:

a computer usable medium having computer readable code embodied therein for establishing a subscription to a periodical, the computer usable medium comprising:

5 a request receiving module configured to receive a request to purchase a single periodical;

an offering module configured to offer to sell a subscription to the periodical at a subscription rate;

an acceptance receiving module configured to receive an acceptance to the offer to sell the subscription; and

10 a recording module configured to record the distribution of the single periodical as the first issue of the subscription.

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68. A system for establishing a subscription to a periodical at a point-of-sale terminal, comprising:

means for receiving at a point-of-sale terminal a single issue of a periodical;

5 means for receiving at the point-of-sale terminal a subscription card requesting a subscription to the periodical, the subscription card containing a first set of subscription information;

means for inputting into the point-of-sale terminal a second set of subscription information, the second set including subscription price and term;

means for receiving payment for the subscription;

means for generating a receipt containing the subscription price and term; and

means for providing the single issue as the first issue of the subscription.

69. A computer program product comprising:

a computer usable medium having computer readable code embodied therein for establishing a subscription to a periodical at a point-of-sale terminal, the computer usable medium comprising:

5 a periodical receiving module configured to receive at a point-of-sale terminal a single issue of a periodical;

a card receiving module configured to receive at the point-of-sale terminal a subscription card requesting a subscription to the periodical, the subscription card containing a first set of subscription information;

10 an inputting module configured to input into the point-of-sale terminal a second set of subscription information, the second set including subscription price and term;

a payment receiving module configured to receive payment for the subscription;

15 a generating module configured to generate a receipt containing the subscription price and term; and

a recording module configured to record the distribution of the single issue as the first issue of the subscription.

70. A system for establishing a subscription to a periodical at a point-of-sale terminal, comprising:

means for receiving at the point-of-sale terminal a single issue of a periodical, the single issue containing a bar code symbol;

5 means for scanning at the point-of-sale terminal the bar code symbol to retrieve periodical information;

means for transmitting the periodical information to a controller;

means for receiving an indication that a subscription to the periodical is available for sale;

10 means for receiving a subscription card requesting a subscription to the periodical, the subscription card containing a first set of subscription information;

means for inputting into the point-of-sale terminal a second set of subscription information, the second set including subscription price and term;

means for receiving payment for the purchase of the subscription;

15 means for generating a receipt; and

means for providing the single issue as the first issue of the subscription.

71. A computer program product comprising:

a computer usable medium having computer readable code embodied therein for establishing a subscription to a periodical at a point-of-sale terminal, the computer usable medium comprising:

5 a periodical receiving module configured to receive at the point-of-sale terminal a single issue of a periodical, the single issue containing a bar code symbol;

a scanning module configured to scan at the point-of-sale terminal the bar code symbol to retrieve periodical information;

10 a transmitting module configured to transmit the periodical information to a controller;

an indication receiving module configured to receive an indication that a subscription to the periodical is available for sale;

15 a card receiving module configured to receive a subscription card requesting a subscription to the periodical, the subscription card containing a first set of subscription information;

an inputting module configured to input into the point-of-sale terminal a second set of subscription information, the second set including subscription price and term;

a payment receiving module configured to receive payment for the purchase of the subscription;

20 a generating module configured to generate a receipt; and

a providing module configured to provide the single issue as the first issue of the subscription.

74. A system for initiating a subscription to a periodical from a retail subscription system, comprising:

means for receiving a completed subscription card indicating that a subscription to a periodical was sold, the subscription card containing subscription information and an authentication code;

means for comparing the authentication code contained on the subscription card with authentication codes stored in a database;

means for determining that the authentication code contained on the subscription card is valid if the authentication code contained on the subscription card matches at least one of the authentication codes stored in the database; and

means for transmitting subscription information from the subscription card to a fulfillment house to initiate the subscription if the authentication code on the subscription card is determined valid.

75. A computer program product comprising:

a computer usable medium having computer readable code embodied therein for initiating a subscription to a periodical from a retail subscription system, the computer usable medium comprising:

5 a receiving module configured to receive a completed subscription card indicating that a subscription to a periodical was sold, the subscription card containing subscription information and an authentication code;

a comparing module configured to compare the authentication code contained on the subscription card with authentication codes stored in a database;

10 a determining module configured to determine that the authentication code contained on the subscription card is valid if the authentication code contained on the subscription card matches at least one of the authentication codes stored in the database; and

15 a transmitting module configured to initiate transmission of subscription information from the subscription card to a fulfillment house to initiate the subscription if the authentication code on the subscription card is determined valid.

76. A system for initiating a subscription, comprising:

means for receiving subscription information associated with a sale of a subscription to a periodical, the subscription information including a subscription term;

5 means for determining a number of issues to be distributed during the subscription term;

means for determining whether the sale of the subscription included distribution of a single issue of the periodical; and

10 means for initiating a subscription for the determined number of issues minus one, if the sale of the subscription is determined to include distribution of a single issue of the periodical.

77. A computer program product comprising:

a computer usable medium having computer readable code embodied therein for initiating a subscription, the computer usable medium comprising:

5 a receiving module configured to receive subscription information associated with a sale of a subscription to a periodical, the subscription information including a subscription term;

an issue determining module configured to determine a number of issues to be distributed during the subscription term;

a distribution determining module configured to determine whether the sale of the subscription included distribution of a single issue of the periodical; and

10 an initiating module configured to initiate a subscription for the determined number of issues minus one, if the sale of the subscription is determined to include distribution of a single issue of the periodical.

78. A system for processing a subscription payment, comprising:
means for receiving a payment for a subscription to a periodical at a point-of-sale
terminal;
means for determining a cost for a single issue of the periodical;
means for transmitting the cost to a periodical wholesaler;
means for determining a first amount to be retained from a balance of the payment;
means for retaining the determined first amount at the point-of-sale terminal; and
means for transmitting a remaining balance of the payment to a retail subscription
system.

79. A computer program product comprising:

a computer usable medium having computer readable code embodied therein for processing a subscription payment, the computer usable medium comprising:

5 a payment receiving module configured to receive a payment for a subscription to a periodical;

a cost determining module configured to determine a cost for a single issue of the periodical;

a transmitting module configured to transmit a payment corresponding to the cost to a periodical wholesaler;

10 a first determining module configured to determine a first amount to be retained from a balance of the payment based on the determination of the single issue cost;

a retaining module configured to retain the first amount ; and

15 a transmitting module configured to transmit a remaining balance of the payment to a retail subscription system.

80. A system for establishing a subscription to a periodical, comprising:
a receiving component configured to receive a periodical to be purchased;
an offering component configured to offer for sale a subscription to the periodical at a subscription price;

5 a selling component configured to sell the subscription for the subscription price; and
a providing component configured to provide the periodical for no additional cost to the subscription price.

81. The system of claim 80, further comprising a recording component configured to record distribution of the periodical as part of the sale of the subscription.

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82. A system for establishing a subscription to a periodical, comprising:

means for receiving a periodical to be purchased;

means for offering for sale a subscription to the periodical at a subscription price;

means for selling the subscription for the subscription price; and

means for providing the periodical for no additional cost to the subscription price.

83. The system of claim 82, further comprising

means for recording distribution of the periodical as part of the sale of the subscription.

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84. A method of establishing a subscription to a periodical, comprising the steps of:
receiving a periodical to be purchased;
offering for sale a subscription to the periodical at a subscription price;
selling the subscription for the subscription price; and
5 providing the periodical for no additional cost to the subscription price.

85. The method according to claim 84, further comprising
recording distribution of the periodical as part of the sale of the subscription.

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